

Al-Qur'an - Miracle of all Miracles

by Ahmed Deedat

Say: If the whole of mankind and jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support.

What is a miracle?

I think it is necessary that we have a clear picture of what we mean by a miracle. Here are some definitions:-

"An event that appears so inexplicable by the laws of nature, that it is held to be supernatural in origin or an act of God."

"A person, thing or event that excites admiring awe."

"An act beyond human power, an impossibility."

It is logical that greater the impossibility, greater the miracle. For example, should a person expire before our very eyes and is certified dead by a qualified medical man, yet later on a mystic or a saint commands the corpse to 'arise!', and to everybody's astonishment the person gets up and walks away, we would label that as a miracle. But if the resurrection of the dead took place after the corpse had been in the mortuary for three days, then we would acclaim this as a greater miracle. And if the dead was made to arise from the grave, decades or centuries after the body had decomposed and rotted away, then in that case we would label it the greatest miracle of them all!

A Common Trait

It has been a common trait of mankind since time immemorial that whenever a guide from God appeared to redirect their steps into the will and plan of God; they demanded supernatural proofs from these men of God, instead of accepting message on its merit.

For example, when Jesus Christ (PBUH) began to preach to his people - "the children of Israel" - to mend their ways and to refrain from mere legalistic formalism and imbibe the true spirit of the laws and commandments of God, his 'people' demanded miracles from him to prove his bona fides (his authenticity, his genuineness), as recorded in the Christian scriptures:

Then certain of the scribes and the pharisees answered, saying master, we would have a sign (miracle) from thee. But he answered and said unto them, "an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign (miracle) and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas (Matthew 12:38-39 holy bible)

Though on the face of it, Jesus (PBUH) refuses to pamper the Jews here, in actual fact, he did perform many miracles as we learn from the gospel narratives.

The holy bible is full of supernatural events accredited to the prophets from their lord. In reality all those 'signs' and 'wonders' and 'miracles' were acts of God, but since those miracles were worked through his human agents, we describe them as the miracles of prophets (i.e. Moses or Jesus (PBUH) by those hands they were performed).

Quirk Continues:

Some six hundred years after the birth of Jesus (PBUH), Muhammad (PBUH) the messenger of God was born in Makkah in Arabia. When he proclaimed his mission at the age of forty, his fellow countrymen, the Mushriks of Makkah made an identical request for miracles, as had the

Jews, from their promised Messiah. Textbook style, it was as if the Arabs had taken a leaf from the Christian records. History has a habit of repeating itself!

And they say: why are not signs sent down to him from his lord? (Qur'an 29:50)

Signs! What Signs!!

"Miracles ? Cries he, what miracles would you have? Are not you yourselves there? God made you 'shaped you out of a little clay.' Ye were small once; a few years ago ye were not at all. Ye have beauty, strength, thoughts, 'ye have compassion on one another.' Old age comes-on you, and grey hairs; your strength fades into feebleness: ye sink down, and again are not. 'Ye have compassion on one another': This struck me much: Allah might have made you having no compassion on one another, how had it been then! this is a great direct though, a glance at first-hand into the very fact of things...." "(On heroes hero-worship and the heroic in history,)" by Thomas Carlyle.

"This Struck Me Much"

This, that "ye have compassion on one another", impressed Thomas Carlyle most from his perusal of an English translation. I presume, the verse that motivated this sentiment is:

1. And among his signs is this, that he created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them. and he has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are signs for those who reflect. (emphasis added) Translation by A Yusuf Ali (Qur'an 30:21)
2. And one of his signs it is, that he hath created wives for you of your own species that ye may dwell with them, and hath put love and tenderness between you. herein truly are signs for those who reflect (emphasis added) Translation by Rev. J.M. Rodwell (M.A.)
3. By another sign he gave you wives from among yourselves, that ye might live in joy with them, and planted love and kindness into your hearts. surely there are signs in this for thinking men(emphasis added) Translation by N.J. Dawood.

The first example is from the translation by Yusuf Ali, a Muslim. The second is by a Christian priest the rev. Rodwell and the last example is by an Iraqi Jew, N.J. Dawood.

Unfortunately Thomas Carlyle had no access to any one of these because none of them had seen the light of day in his time. The only one available to him in 1840 was as he said on page 85 of his book under reference - "We also can read the Koran; our translation of it, by sale, is known to be a very fair one."

Taint Is In The Motive

Carlyle is very charitable to his fellow countryman. The motives of George Sale, who pioneered an English translation of the Holy Qur'an, were suspect. He makes no secret of his antagonism to the holy book of Islam. In his preface to his translation in 1734 he made it known that it was his avowed intention to expose the man Muhammad and his forgery. He records: "who can apprehend any danger from so manifest a forgery?... The protestants alone are able to attack the koran with success; and for them, I trust, providence has reserved the glory of its overthrow." George Sale, And he set to work with his prejudiced translation. You will be able to judge how 'fair' and scholarly George sale was from the very verse which 'struck' (Carlyle) 'much!' Compare it with the three example already given by a Muslim, a Christian and a Jew: And of his signs another is, that he had created you , out of yourselves, wives that ye may cohabit with them, and hath put love and compassion between you.

I don't think that George Sale was a 'male chauvinist pig' of his day to describe our mates, wives or spouses as sexual objects. He was only keeping to his promise, which Carlyle overlooked. The Arabic word which he (Sale) perverted is 'li-tas-kunoo' which means to find peace, consolation, composure or tranquillity; and not 'cohabit' meaning 'to live together in a sexual relationship when not legally married' (the reader's digest universal dictionary.)

Every word of the Qur'anic text is meticulously chosen, chiselled and placed by the All-Wise himself. They carry God's 'fingerprint', and are signs of God. And yet, the spiritually jaundiced....

Ask For A Sign

What signs?? They mean some special kinds of signs or miracles such as their own foolish minds dictate. Everything is possible for God, but God is not going to humour the follies of men or listen to their false demands. He has sent his messenger to explain his signs clearly, and to warn them of the consequences of rejection. Is that not enough? The trend of their demand is generally as follows:

In specific terms they asked that he - Muhammad (PBUH) - 'Put a ladder up to heaven and bring down a book from God in their very sight' - "Then we would believe," they said. Or "ye see the mountain yonder, turn it into gold" - "then we would believe." or 'make streams to gush out in the desert' - "then we would believe."

Now listen to the soft, sweet reasoning of Muhammad (PBUH) against the unreasonable and sceptical demands of the Mushriks - "Do I say to you, verily I am an angel? Do I say to you, verily in my hands are the treasures of God? Only, what is revealed to me do I follow." Listen further to the most dignified reply he is commanded by his Lord to give the unbelievers.

Say (O Muhammad): 'The signs (miracles) are indeed with Allah: And most certainly I am only a clear warner!'

In the following ayah the holy prophet is made to point to the holy Qur'an itself as an answer to their hypocritical demand for some special kind of 'sign' of 'miracle' for which their foolish pagan mentality craved. For indeed all miracles are 'signs'; and it is their disbelief, their scepticism, their lack of faith which motivates their request for a sign. They are asked to - 'look at the Qur'an' and again, 'look at the Qur'an!'

It is not enough for them that we have sent down to thee (O Muhammad) the book (al-Qur'an) which is rehearsed to them? Verily, in it (this perspicuous book) is a mercy and reminder to those who believe. (Qur'an 29:51)

Two Proofs

As a proof of the divine authorship and the miraculous nature of the Qur'an, two arguments are advanced by the almighty Himself:

1. 'that we' (God Almighty) have revealed to you (O Muhammad!) 'the book to you' who art absolutely an unlearned person. An 'ummi' prophet. One who cannot read or write. One who cannot sign his own name. Let Thomas Carlyle testify regarding the educational qualifications of Muhammad - 'one other circumstance we must not forget: that he had no school learning; of the thing we call school-learning none at all.' Moreover the divine author (God Almighty) himself testifies to the veracity of Muhammad's (PBUH) claim that he could never have composed the contents of the holy Qur'an; he could not have been its author:

And thou (O Muhammad) was not (able) to recite a book before this (book came), nor art thou (able) to transcribe it with thy right hand: In that case, indeed, would the talkers of vanities have doubted. (Qur'an 29:48)

The author of the Qur'an is reasoning with us, that had Muhammad(PBUH) been a learned man, and had he been able to read or write, then in that case the babblers in the market places might have had some justification to doubt his claim that the holy Qur'an is God's word. In the event of Muhammad(PBUH) being a literate person, the accusation of his enemies that he had probably copied his book (Qur'an) from the writings of the Jews and Christians, or that perhaps he had been studying Aristotle and Plato, or that he must have browsed through the 'Torat,' the 'Zabur' and the 'Injeel' and had rehashed it all in a beautiful language, might have carried some weight. Then, 'the talkers of vanities' might have had a point. But even this flimsy pretence has been denied to the unbeliever and the cynic: a point hardly big enough to hang a fly upon!

2. 'The book'? Yes, the 'book' itself, carries its own evidence proving its divine authorship. Study the book from any angle. Scrutinize it. Why not take up the author's challenge if your doubts are genuine? Do they not consider the Qur'an(with care) had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy.

Consistency

It is inconceivable that any human author would remain consistent in his teachings and his preaching for a period of over two decades. From the age of forty, when Muhammad (PBUH) received his first call from heaven to the age sixty-three when he breathed his last, for twenty-three years the holy prophet practised and preached Islam. In those twenty-three years, he passed through the most conflicting vicissitudes of life. Any man, during the course of such a mission, would be forced by circumstances to make 'honourable' compromises, and cannot help contradicting himself. No man can ever write the same always, as the message of the holy Qur'an is: consistent with itself, throughout! Or is it that the unbeliever's objections are merely argumentative, refractory, against their own better light and judgement.? Furthermore, the holy Qur'an contains or mentions many matters relating to the nature of the universe which were unknown to man before but which subsequently through evolution and discoveries of Science have fully confirmed - a field where an untutored mind would have most certainly lost in wild and contradictory speculations!

Self-Evident Proof

Again and again when miracles are demanded from the prophet of God by the cynical and frivolous few, he is made to point to the Qur'an - message from high - as 'the miracle.' The miracle or miracles! And men of wisdom, people with literary and spiritual insight, who were honest enough to themselves, recognised and accepted al-Qur'an as a genuine miracle. Says the holy Qur'an:

**Nay here are signs self-evident in the hearts of those
endowed with knowledge: And none but the unjust
reject our signs. (Qur'an 29:49)**